Part Two

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GRAND OPERA HOUSE—COMING ATTRACTIONS

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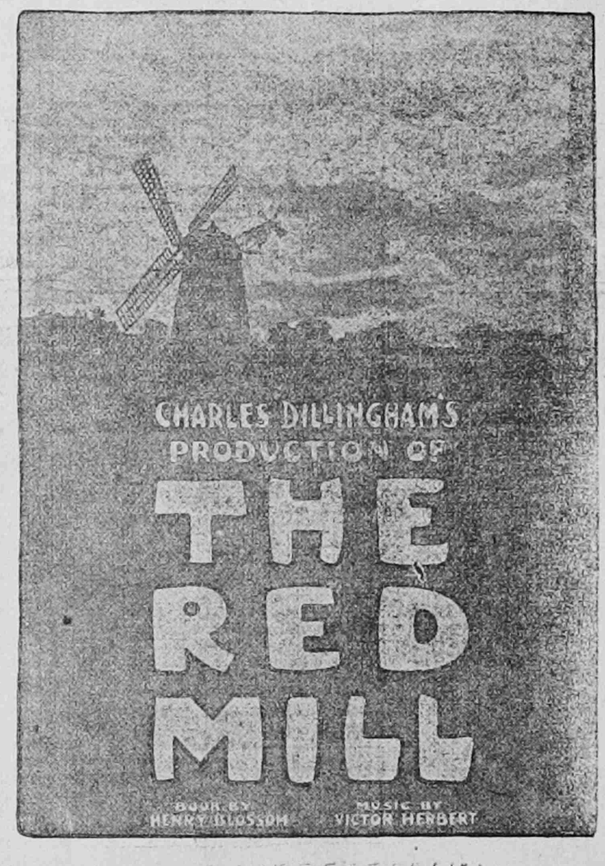

"THE BURGOMASTER" WEDNESDAY.

Harry Hermsen and dainty Ruth White will head the big revival of "The Burgomaster," which Wm. P. Cullen will present at the Grand Wednesday. The two clever people are in the roles of Peter Stuyvesant, governor of New Amsterdam, who sleeps for 200 years and awakes to find himself in modern New York, and of Willie, the gilded youth who essays to show him around the town. The costumes for the revival are all new, and are the handsomest, it is said, of any comic opera now touring. The scenery is all new, some of the scenes having been changed. "The Burgomaster" was the first of the Prixley & Luder's successes to gain favor. It is in class with "Robin Hood" and "The Prince of Pilsen" for tunefulness and many of the numbers have come to be known as classic. "The Tale of the Kangaroo," "I Love You," the famous Indian chorus, "The Rainy Daisies," and other songs have a lilt that sends the auditor from the theater whistling merrily. Miss White has written a new song which experts claim will be a large seller. It is entitled "How Many Have You Told That To?" The chorus, which is a very large one, has been selected especially for its singing and dancing ability. Mr. Cullen will be remembered as the producer of "The Burgomaster" and "The Tenderfoot."

"THE RED MILL" SATURDAY.

The scenes of Charles Dillingham's production of the musical play, "The Red Mill," in which those two clever comedians, Whitehead and McNeil, take the leading roles, are laid in Holland. It is believed that this is the first play ever presented in America devoted exclusively to the portrayal of Dutch character and location. The quaint atmosphere of the country of dykes, windmills and wooden shoes is said to have been capitally caught by the author, Henry Blossom, and tunefully portrayed by the composer, Victor Herbert.

"The Red Mill" is in two acts. The first depicts a square in the town of Katwyk-aan-Zee, a picturesque place on the North Sea. The picture is said to be absolutely correct and a duplication of an actual scene. In the background is the great, practical, red windmill, from which the play takes its name, with its slowly sweeping sails, and at one side is a funny little Dutch inn, which has an important bearing on the story. The second scene shows a delft blue interior representing the house of the Burgomaster. Both these settings are typical of the artistic distinction that characterizes all of Charles Dillingham's productions.

The plot revolves around two stranded Americans, played by Wells and McNeil. They are unable for some time to escape from the windmill region because they can't pay their board bill. In an effort to evade it, which calls for a sensational sortie from a gabled window, they are captured by the Burgomaster, and put to work; one as a waiter and the other as an interpreter. The Burgomaster's daughter has a love affair with a young sailor, and when her father finds out about it he imprisons her in the old red mill, which has the reputation of being haunted.

EXTRA CAR FOR "MERRY WIDOW."

Manager of "The Burgomaster" Orders Another Car.

H. P. Hill, in advance of "The Burgomaster," was in Ogden yesterday, and is sorely puzzled over a telegram which he recently received from Wm. P. Cullen, manager of the production. The telegram simply conveys the information that hereafter for day jumps the troupe will require two passenger coaches instead of one, as formerly, to carry the forty-seven people in the cast.

He believes the the immense popularity of the "Merry Widow" hat, which he describes as the greatest thing ever placed on the head of a woman, is responsible for the requirement of an extra coach. The fact that the larger part of the company is composed of good looking girls, who are up to date in everything, lends credence to his theory.

Local agents of the railroad company have been notified that hereafter for day jumps "The Burgomaster" will require an extra coach and it is doubtful if they even dream that they requirement is due to a desire on the part of the manager of the production to indulge the whims of his chorus in affording them ample room to wear the latest thing in woman's headdress, at all times.

Mr. Hill declares that the chorus girls, or the female members of the company, are not only the ones in the company whose whims disturb the peaceful mind of the manager, but insists that a fad of the chorus men during a recent engagement of "The Burgomaster," at Peoria, Illinois, came very near driving Mr. Cullen to strong drink.

During the time the company was in the Central City, an up-to-date curio dealer had some canes made, which he named "The Burgomaster canes." These canes were all the rage during the stay of the company in Peoria and made a decided impression on the male members of the chorus, all of whom invested in one.

The mere fact that sixteen members of the company purchased canes wouldn't have caused so much trouble had it not been for the fact that the heads of the canes were of such size—not as large as a "Merry Widow" hat, but just l arge enough to make one passenger coach look like it had all it could hold, when the company was traveling in it.

The more Mr. Hill thinks of those canes and conjures up pictures of that bunch of pretty girls wearing "Merry Widow" nats, the more he is convinced that he is "wise" to the reason for the requirement of another coach.

A THEATRICAL EXPEDIMENT.

That Has Reached Perfection in "The Red Mill" Company.

This story, being about understudies, really ought to be adorned by a picture of pretty Inez de Verdier, who made the biggest understudy hit in Cleveland's theatrical history. But Miss de Verdier, for that very good reason, is no longer an understudy and this understudy story will have to struggle along with no other pictorial adornment than the faces of three other members of the beauty chorus in "The Red Mill," which is scheduled as the attraction at the Grand Saturday.

The triumph of Inez de Verdier is a tale often told and always with rejoicing. It happened two or three seasons ago when the skittish Fritzi Scheff was playing an engagement at the Cleveland Opera House. The prima donna declined to go on for one of the performances, and Miss de Verdier, who had understudied the role, was told to go ahead and make good, if she could.

If she could! Say, the way that opera house audience got up on its feet and howled its approbation of Inez de Verdier and her singing and dancing and her pretty face and pretty ways will never be forgotten by those who happened to see and hear it. It doesn't make the story any worse to add that Fritzi herself is supposed to have witnessed her understudy's triumph from a surreptitious seat in the balcony.

Miss de Verdier is now one of the shining lights of "The Red Mill." This show is under the management of Charles Dillingham, the same who controls Scheff (or tries to) and divers other stars.

Nobody knows the advantage of systematic understudying better than Dillingham, and his shows fill their dates in spite of sickness or tantrums.

Understudying is the technical name for the system of substitutes that came into vogue soon after the show business got to be a real business proposition. It means that the lines, songs, cues and "business" of every principal part in a production are studied by some minor member of the company, as well as by the player cast for the part. The understudy is usually a chorus man or woman, who never will be missed from his usual place should the opportunity offer to fill the place of a missing principal. These opportunities are anxiously awaited and not infrequently prove golden chances, as witness the cases of Miss de Verdier and the unknown who made an awful hit in New York last summer when a well-known comedian disappeared rather suddenly.

"Understudying is only a form of theatrical insurance," says Charles Hoskins, the stage manager, whose arrangements have prepared "The Red Mill" company for any emergency. "It's an old institution now, but we probably carry it further than most organizations.

In the average company understudying is a provision that managers cultivate perfunctorily. It is a part of the stage machinery, like the prompter. Here we have expanded and cultivated the system until it is practically a complete operatic curriculum.

Our experience has shown conclusively that work with the subordinate material pays. Girls and men who come to us for auxiliary positions know that they are offered possibilities that are not common in the profession. A chorus man or woman who may be with us but a month or two, by providing his or her ability to interpret satisfactorily one of the understudy roles, may bound to distinction in a night. We have had a number of instances in this way, even within the past season."

ABOUT PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Discussion of the modern tendency of musical comedy compositions brings about emphatic opinions from Emil Bierman, director of music for "The Red Mill," which comes to the Grand Saturday.

Mr. Bierman has given voice to a few criticisms that should, but probably will not, make the ears of some alleged composers tingle with a ruddy glow.

"Music has advanced tremendously in this country within the last decade," said the director. "American composers of great merit have written successful works. American singers can be heard upon the boards of our first lyric stage and American musicians have made a name for themselves as executants of a first-class order upon various instruments.

"But one glance will suffice to show us that the first-class houses all over the United States resound with a noise which in almost all cases deserves to be called by quite another name than music. It means to me that a lot of grafters, know-nothings, jugglers or pirates, command this field almost entirely. Education is rather a hindrance, execution is absolutely necessary, invention is laughed at and refinement of feeling is not in their dictionary. In place of these adjuncts appear excellent business qualifications, bluff manner and a wonderful ear, combined with the most callous conscience in the world, for decomposing the brain works of true musicians.

"The public, as well as the critics, is not slow to measure the standard of a musical play concooted by such creatures, as can be seen; in the numerous failures of such pieces and their short life, even if successful from a box office standpoint. I emphasize these last words, because the accidental success of such a concoction in no way indicates that artistic atmosphere and musical knowledge have been employed in its making. The real reason for such a success is found in excellent stage management, in the temporal vogue of a fine actor, or in the eternal feminine, generally advertised as the beauty chorus of the world.

"I often wonder if certain managers fool themselves into the belief that the public at large is fond of such shows. Their contention as to the life of these pieces is based upon the fact that some of them made money, but if they consider the short-lived success of such a piece and the incidental expense of each new production, they will see that the public is feeling them and not they the public. Things have come to such a pass that meritorious composers are engaged nowadays to write the score only partially. The tunes that are intended for the low brows are supplied by the so-called song writers, who are without education or judgment as to the fitness of things musical."

Mr. Bierman does not class all modern composers alike. He regards Victor Herbert as one of the notable exceptions and declares that Herbert possesses far more than the adjuncts necessary to make up a true musician and composer.

FLORENCE ROBERTS.

"The House of Bondage," the new play in which Florence Roberts will appear at the Grand soon, seems to have scored a really extraordinary success. In fact the word that precedes this play is not merely pleasant and reassuring, but highly enthusiastic.

It is declared that Miss Roberts has had no vehicle in her career that has offered her such salient opportunities or which embodied a theme so daring and original. When it is said that the pivotal climax of the piece arises through a vital operation by a great surgeon upon the husband of the woman he (the surgeon) loves. Some idea of the tremendous dramatic powers of the piece may be imagined.

Miss Roberts, in the role of the neglected wife of a brilliant English parliamentarian, has a part that suits to a T her great gifts as an emotional actress. Her support is a very strong one, containing the names of Arthur Forrest, Thurlow Bergen, Kent Bosworth, Harry Gibbs, Ann Warrington and Mary Bertrand.